

# Great Lakes Bulletin

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## RTC Moves Recruit Initial 14-day ROM out of Fort McCoy

*Story from Recruit Training Command Public Affairs*



After an 8-month joint-service endeavor between Recruit Training Command (RTC) and Fort McCoy, a U.S. Army training center in western Wisconsin, RTC began moving the command's recruit restriction of movement (ROM) site from Ft. McCoy to RTC's facilities April 19. The command's ROM site had been located at Ft. McCoy since August 2020.

"We are grateful to the Fort McCoy Army leadership for their outstanding support that enabled us to achieve our mission," said Capt. Erik Thors, commanding officer, RTC. "We could not have achieved the same level of success we did without Fort McCoy and multiple Navy commands who provided personnel support."

RTC began housing incoming recruits on site April 19 to execute their initial 14-day ROM prior to beginning boot camp at RTC.

Executing ROM at RTC provides leadership more flexibility regarding staff schedules. It also allows supporting Sailors to return to their parent commands after months of hard work away from their families to support the RTC mission. "The transition of ROM operations from Fort McCoy to RTC is an important first step to normalizing training operations during the pandemic," said Rear. Adm. Jamie Sands III, commander, Naval Service Training Command. "We could not have successfully trained new recruits during these past eight months without the help and support of Fort McCoy, the Army, the Wisconsin National Guard, and the hard work and flexibility of RTC's staff."

RTC continues to work with medical experts to ensure it can train recruits while preventing the transmission of COVID-19.





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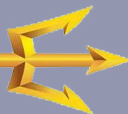
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# **CNIC**

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Boot camp is approximately eight weeks and all enlistees into the U.S. Navy begin their careers at the command. Training includes physical fitness, seamanship, firearms, firefighting and shipboard damage control along with lessons in Navy heritage and core values, teamwork and discipline. More than 40,000 recruits train annually at the Navy's only boot camp. For more news from Recruit Training Command, visit [www.navy.mil/local/rtc](http://www.navy.mil/local/rtc).

# **Flag Raised for First Time at National World War I Memorial**

*Story by Todd C. Lopez, DoD News*

The nation's capital has national memorials commemorating the sacrifices of service men and women who died in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Until this year, there hasn't been a national memorial commemorating World War I.

Today, during a "first colors" ceremony, the U.S. flag was raised for the first time over the newly-constructed National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Nearly 4.7 million Americans served in uniform during WWI, with more than 2 million of those deploying overseas. By war's end, 204,000 of those who deployed had been wounded, and nearly 117,000 had been killed.

"The Great War [touched] almost every American family at the time," President Joe Biden said during a recorded presentation before the raising of the flag. "For too long, that nationwide service has not been fully commemorated here in the nation's capital. This memorial finally will offer a chance for people to visit and reflect and to remember. More than 100 years has passed since WWI ended, but the legacy and courage of those Doughboys sailing off to war, and the values they fought to defend, still live in our nation today."

The new memorial features sculptures, fountains and quotes which pay tribute to those who served in World War I. It shares a space with an existing memorial dedicated to General of the Armies John Joseph "Black Jack" Pershing, who served as commander of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I. The site is a short walk east of the White House.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley said the site is a testament to the strength of the American people, and that it honors the bravery and sacrifice made by service members during what was known as "the Great War," which he characterized as a war of stalemate, trenches and attrition.

"It is our duty to remember what they fought for and why they fought," Milley said. "Thought to be the war to end all wars, those who lived it experienced unimaginable carnage. And by the end of the conflict, it ripped apart four empires and killed more than 22 million people, and it set the conditions for World War II, 20 years later — which was the most destructive war in human history."

World War I ended 102 years ago, but the effects of that conflict are still felt today, Milley said.

"It was one of the most significant events to fundamentally shape the modern world," he said.

At the memorial, the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) raised the American flag for the first time over the site, while a bugler from the U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own," played "To the Colors" on a bugle once owned by Pershing himself. As an added tribute, there was a flyover by two F-22 Raptor aircraft from the 94th Fighter Squadron, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia.



# Navy decommissions USS Bonhomme Richard

*Story by Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet*

The U.S. Navy held a decommissioning ceremony for the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) at Naval Base San Diego on April 14.

The ceremony highlighted the history of the ship, its crew, and their legacy. Bonhomme Richard was the third ship to bear the name. It was named in honor of John Paul Jones' famous frigate, named the French equivalent for "Good man Richard." This was in honor of Benjamin Franklin, the U.S. Ambassador to France at the time. The name Bonhomme Richard is derived from Franklin's pen name.

"[The original Bonhomme Richard] Sailors gave their all to prevail against seemingly impossible odds, and they won," said Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 3. "They taught us that you don't always save the ship, but you never stop fighting. The reputation of that fighting spirit began to proceed our Navy wherever we sailed and that same spirit persists today."

Like the previous five Wasp-class ships, Bonhomme Richard was designed to embark, deploy, and land elements of a Marine landing force in amphibious assault operations by helicopter, landing craft, or amphibious vehicles.

Throughout its history, Bonhomme Richard projected power and maintained presence by serving as the cornerstone of Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG) or Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESG). It transported and landed elements of the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) or Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) with a combination of aircraft and landing craft.

Not long after commissioning, the ship was called to action for Operation Stabilize in February 2000, providing peacekeeping and humanitarian operations of the coast of East Timor. This made Bonhomme Richard the first U.S. Navy ship to make a Western Pacific deployment in the 2000s.

Bonhomme Richard's following deployment put it in the spotlight of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The ship offloaded more than a thousand Marines and their equipment from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines into Kuwait. After delivering attack and transport helicopters, as well as troops and vehicles, Bonhomme Richard took position just miles off the coast of Kuwait to launch AV-8B Harrier aircraft into Iraq. From the deck of Bonhomme Richard, Marine Attack Squadrons (VMA) 211 and 311 flew missions into Iraq and expended more than 175,000 pounds of ordnance and provided close air support to Marines on the ground. In total, the ship launched more than 800 sorties in support



of Operation Iraqi Freedom. More than 500 of those were combat launches.

On April 23, 2012, Bonhomme Richard replaced USS Essex (LHD 2) as the ESG Strike Group 7 command ship and switched homeports from San Diego to Sasebo, Japan. After six years as the centerpiece of the U.S. Navy amphibious operations in the forward-deployed naval forces, Bonhomme Richard returned to San Diego in May 2018 in a homeport change.

As the crew prepared the ship for decommissioning, members of the team slowly began transferring to new commands across the fleet, leaving a minimal-sized crew aboard for the decommissioning ceremony.

"As BHR [Bonhomme Richard] Sailors disperse throughout the fleet, take the teamwork, spirit, and unity to your next command," said Capt. Gregory S. Thoroman, Bonhomme Richard's commanding officer. "For this crew and what we experienced together is the embodiment of our core values of honor, courage, and commitment. The resiliency I saw—man or woman, seaman and up to our highest ranks, united in our common cause and strength to depend on each other—lived up to my motto of train to fight and fight to win. It has been my honor and absolute privilege to serve as your commanding officer."

In parting words to his crew, Thoroman left them with some counsel for their futures in the Navy. "If I can leave you with any advice moving forward it is to be true to yourselves, own it, and earn it every single day," Thoroman said. "There is always something you can do to make your command better. Seek it out. Find it and do it."

Following its decommissioning, Bonhomme Richard will be towed to International Shipbreaking Limited, LLC's facility in Brownsville, Texas for dismantlement.

# CNIC force protection urge shipmates to take COVID-19 vaccine

*Story by Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet*



Commander, Navy Installations Command's force protection personnel have largely embraced their early eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine and encouraged their teammates to accept the shot, if they haven't already.

"I got the vaccine when I had the chance because, plain and simple, I want to protect myself, my family and my co-workers," shared Master-at-Arms 1st Class Juan Padron, assigned to Naval Air Facility El Centro. "Take the vaccine... The world's best scientists and medical professionals were tasked with creating it."

Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Michael Garcia, a patrolman also assigned to NAF El Centro, agreed with his shipmate. "There is enough research by scientists and medical professionals to ensure that the vaccines work. Get your shot when you can and let's help lift the liberty restrictions." Force protection is responsible for installation law enforcement, anti-terrorism, physical and operations security, meaning their duties put them in contact with hundreds of people each day, even during the pandemic. A thoroughly vaccinated security force is critical for maintaining mission readiness and for protecting their own communities.

"Getting the vaccine was easy and all information on it highlights that it's safe and effective," shared Master-at-Arms 1st Class Daniel Wright, assigned to Naval Submarine Base New London Security Forces. "I did it for my wife and newborn daughter at home. I'm the risk to the family because I come into contact with a lot of people every day." Wright admitted to declining the vaccine the first time it was offered through his command out of concern that he'd

have an allergic reaction and be unable to help his wife  
4 care for their infant daughter.

"I later decided to take the vaccine because stopping COVID-19 is a group effort," said Wright. "Being vaccinated means I help prevent others from getting ill, because I'm less likely to spread it myself. I keep people that don't have the option to receive the vaccine, such as my family, safe."

For many across the country, a misunderstanding of the science and safety testing behind the vaccines remains the primary reason cited for refusing inoculation. Wright credited the virtual town halls hosted by NSB New London leadership and medical professionals for addressing his concerns and putting his mind at ease.

The fact is that the COVID-19 vaccines currently available to service members- Pfizer and Moderna- have been proven to be safe and effective according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Over 145 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine were administered in the United States from Dec. 14 through March 29 under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history.

Prior to being made publicly available, COVID-19 vaccines were evaluated in tens of thousands of participants in clinical trials. The vaccines met FDA's rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality needed to support emergency use authorization.

Information on the safety and differences between COVID-19 vaccines is available on the Centers for Disease Control website: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/index.html>.

For information on where service members and dependents can get the vaccine, please visit <https://www.tricare.mil/covidvaccine> or speak to your chain of command.



# Annual Fire Hydrant Flushing

Fire hydrant flushing will be performed on 1 - 2 May from 0600 to 1700. Fire hydrant flushing will include all fire hydrants base wide, as well as all housing areas at Great Lakes, fire hydrants located at RTC and Camp John Paul Jones, and fire hydrants at the Federal Health Care Center.

Each hydrant on base will be flushed for approximately 5-15 minutes. Flushing is necessary to ensure clean safe potable water out of the water distribution system. As a result of the flushing, you may experience discolored water on these days. If you do notice discolored water, run your water for 5 to 15 minutes until it clears up. Exercise caution when laundering whites during these times to prevent discoloring of laundry items.

For your safety, if you are traveling by vehicle or on foot, do not attempt to cross the path of any hydrant water flow, it may seem harmless but injuries or property damage could result.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact PWD Maintenance Shop Mario Torres at 630-669-6850 or [mario.c.torres@navv.mil](mailto:mario.c.torres@navv.mil).

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**SAPR**  
WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 28

**Virtual 5K**

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**WHAT:**  
Walk, run, bike, or otherwise move your body 3.1 miles to raise awareness about and give support to survivors of sexual assault. All commands, their family, and friends are welcome to participate.

**WHERE:**  
Wherever you are! Go 3.1 miles around your neighborhood or do laps inside your apartment. Whatever you can safely do within the COVID 19 guidelines.

**HOW:**  
Wear something teal!  
Snap a picture of yourself. Send it to [saprgreatlakes@gmail.com](mailto:saprgreatlakes@gmail.com).  
The first 150 people to email proof of participation will receive a T-shirt and participation certificate!



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**Fleet and Family Support Center** is now open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., for most services. The **USO** and **MWR** are either closed or providing limited services until further notice. For any questions regarding upcoming events, classes, or other concerns, please contact the appropriate organization.

**Thank you!**



Visit [www.navylifegl.com](http://www.navylifegl.com) for more information



**Fleet and Family Support Center Great Lakes**  
525 Farragut Ave, Bldg. 26  
(847) 688 - 3603 ex. 100

[www.cnic.navy.mil/navylifema](http://www.cnic.navy.mil/navylifema)

# Naval Safety Center Launches Annual 101 Critical Days Of Summer Safety Campaign

*Story by Sarah Langdon, Naval Safety Center Safety Promotions*



Summer is almost upon us and it is, once again, time for the Naval Safety Center's (NAVSAFECEN) annual 101 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign. Summer is the longest vacation period of the year. As the restrictions of COVID-19 begin to relax across the globe in compliance with country, state and military base guidelines, there will be an increase in people who are out enjoying the sunshine and warm weather, swimming, boating, playing and traveling.

"There is no doubt the past year has been hard as COVID-19 forced us to adapt to a new way of life as we continued to meet our operational commitments across the Navy and Marine Corps during a global pandemic," said RDML F. R. Luchtman, Commander, Naval Safety Center.

While there is a light at the end of the tunnel, it's crucial that we maintain our resiliency and Warrior Toughness. Warrior Toughness refers to the ability to: 1) Fight after sustaining a hit; 2) Perform under pressure; and 3) Endure the long slow grind.

"As we get closer to summer, it's critical that we acknowledge the ways we have been affected by the pandemic. We want everyone to get out and enjoy their summer, but we also want you to stay safe, and make good decisions while engaging in summer activities," said Luchtman.

The 101 Critical Days of Summer campaign provides critical information to raise awareness and assist in mitigating the risks associated with the most common off-duty mishaps. The campaign launches at the start of Memorial Weekend and runs through the end of Labor Day weekend. During this time,

6 the Navy and Marine Corps mishap and fatality rates have

historically spiked. Each year from fiscal years (FY) 2016 - 2020, the Department of the Navy (DON) lost an average of five Sailors and nine Marines in off-duty mishaps.

Between May 22 and Sept. 15 of last year, the Navy and Marine Corps experienced nine fatalities – two from private motor vehicles, two motorcycle fatalities, one drowning mishap and one light civil aircraft crash. Three service members also lost their lives in pedestrian-related mishaps.

The campaign's goal is to ensure Sailors and Marines are aware of the risks associated with summertime activities and take appropriate precautions to minimize those risks while on and off duty.

"Mishaps are typically more common as the weather gets warmer," said NAVSAFECEN Command Master Chief, CMDPCM(SW/AW/IW) Jimmy Hailey. "Therefore, it is especially important to emphasize safety as we enter into the summer months. Providing this safety information will enable our Sailors to make better-educated choices and decisions when engaging in summer-related activities this year."

Throughout the summer campaign, NAVSAFECEN will promote and disseminate a variety of media and training products to inform the Naval Enterprise on common risks associated with summertime activities to include a comprehensive 101 Critical Days of Summer presentation, downloadable posters and tip sheets and articles via its social media channels and official website.

For additional resources on safety awareness, visit the Naval Safety Center's website, <https://navalsafetycenter.navy.mil>.